

REMARKS

By the present Amendment, Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 15-20 have been canceled. Claims 21-26 have been added. Upon entry of the present Amendment, Claims 1-14 and 21-26 will be pending.

Support for the amendment to Claim 1 can be found on pages 97-127 and 165 of the Specification. Support for newly added Claims 21 and 22 is found on page 41 of the Specification. Support for newly added Claim 23 is found on page 98 of the Specification. Support for newly added Claim 24 is found on pages 117 to 125 of the Specification. Support for newly added Claim 25 is found on pages 22 and 23 of the Specification. Support for newly added Claim 26 is found on pages 138 to 140 of the Specification.

Claims 15 and 17 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over Uytterhoeven. Applicants note that Claims 15 and 17 have been cancelled.

Claims 15-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated, or in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Toyo. Applicants note that Claims 15-20 have been cancelled.

Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Toyo. Applicants note that Claims 19 and 20 have been cancelled.

Claims 1-4 and 15 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated, or in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Siga. Claims 15-20 have been cancelled. Regarding the this rejection in light of pending claims 1-4, Applicants state as follows.

Siga '889 relates to a post-activation type dry image forming material. As described in column 1, lines 7-14 of the specification of Siga, the material is nonphotosensitive under normal lighting conditions but is rendered photosensitive by carrying out specific processing referred to as preliminary heating (heat activation). That which causes the action by which the material becomes photosensitive due to this heat

activation is the combination of element (d) an oxidizing agent for free silver, and element (e) a photoreactive halogeno oxidizing agent recited in the claims.

In contrast, the image forming method of claim 1 of the present application, uses a photosensitive material comprising a "photosensitive silver halide", which has photosensitivity from the start, and is a "regular thermal-development image forming method" in which the material is thermally developed after image-wise exposure thereof. Therefore, the image forming method of present claim 1 does not require the combination of element (d) an oxidizing agent for free silver, and element (e) a photoreactive halogeno oxidizing agent, which are required in the post-activation type dry image forming material of Siga '889.

Further, the image forming method of amended claim 1 has the features of using the specific adsorbable reducing agent represented by formula (I) in addition to the reducing agent functioning as a developer. As a result, the unexpected remarkable effect of improved unprocessed stock storability is obtained. The constitution and the effects of this image forming method are neither disclosed, nor suggested in Siga '889, and therefore, neither the image forming method of present claim 1, nor the differences between Siga '889 and this method can be considered to be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

The unexpected remarkable effect of improved unprocessed stock storability is shown in Table 2 in the Examples of the present Specification. In other words, although there is not a large difference in unprocessed stock storability at thermal developing times of 24 seconds and 12 seconds for Sample No. 1, which is a comparative example, a large difference in unprocessed stock storability at thermal developing times of 24 seconds and 12 seconds can be recognized for Sample Nos. 2-4 of the present invention (in which the photosensitive silver halide has a silver iodide content of 40 to 100 mol%, the specific adsorbable reducing agent represented by formula (I) is used in addition to the reducing agent functioning as a developer, and the specific organic polyhalogen compound represented by formula (H) is further used in combination with the specific adsorbable reducing agent in the photosensitive material).

Claims 5-14 and 16-20 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) based on Siga in further view of Matsumoto, Toya and Toya.

As discussed above, Siga '889, which relates to a post-activation type dry image forming material, and Toya '419, Toya '126, and Matsumoto, which relate to a "regular thermal-development image forming method", differ from each other with regard to the mode of the thermal-development image forming method and the photosensitive material used in the method. Therefore, there would be no motivation for a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine these references.

In Paragraphs 9-14 of the Office Action, Claims 15-20 were rejected. Applicants note that Claims 15-20 have been cancelled.

Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 USC 102(a) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over EP 1276007A1 '007. In response, Applicants note as follows.

EP '007 does not disclose thermally developing a photosensitive material further including an adsorbable redox compound over a short time of 1 to 12 seconds, and moreover, it is neither disclosed, nor suggested that the effect of improving unprocessed stock storability can be obtained according to this image forming method. It must be noted that even if the mercapto compound-1 and the mercapto compound-2 disclosed in the Examples of EP '007 have adsorbability, they do not have reducibility, nor do they correspond to the chemical structure stipulations of the adsorbable redox compound represented by formula (I) relating to the image forming method of present claim 1. Further, the same compounds are also used in the Examples of the present application, in combination with the adsorbable redox compound of present claim 1 and the like.

In order to establish the specificity of the effect of improving unprocessed stock storability achieved by the image forming method of the present invention, Applicants are submitting herewith a Declaration under CFR 1.132 which compares the effect of improving unprocessed stock storability among photosensitive materials which do not include the adsorbable redox compound represented by formula (I) relating to the image forming method of present claim 1 and among photosensitive materials including

Appl. No. 10/766,939
Amdt. dated August 7, 2005
Reply to Office Action of April 7, 2005

adsorbable redox compounds other than those used in the Examples, at developing times of 12 seconds and 14 seconds (which is used in the Examples of EP '007).

In Paragraphs 17-20 of the Office Action, Claims 15-20 are rejected based on double-patenting. Applicants note that Claims 15-20 have been cancelled.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that all of the claims currently pending in the application are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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